

BIG QUESTIONS

Part 3: What Does the Bible Say about Heaven?

Mike Taylor

www.TaylorNotes.Info



“Most of us find it very difficult to want Heaven’ at all—except in so far as ‘Heaven’ means meeting again our friends who have died. One reason for this difficulty is that we have not been trained: our whole education tends to fix our minds on this world. Another reason is that when the real want for Heaven is present in us, we do not recognize it.” (C.S. Lewis quoted in “Heaven” by Randy Alcorn).

THREE WORLDVIEWS OF LIFE

- Cyclical View: An endless circle, spiraling back through the same things over and over again (Ancient Greeks, Hinduism, New Age).
- Linear and non-repetitive view: There is no meaning to life; no ultimate goal or purpose (evolutionists, atheists). Life ceases at death.
- Christian View: Life has a purpose and an ultimate goal (Job 42:2; Isa. 46:10; 43:13). Believers will ultimately live for eternity in heaven with God.¹

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT HEAVEN?

1. Ephesians 1:9-10 NIV

“...he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.”

- **“To bring all things together” meaning there will no longer be separate realms of heaven and earth.**
- **“Heaven and earth will no longer be separated as they are now.”²**
- **New heaven, new earth, new Jerusalem will all be accessible and under one head, Jesus Christ.**
- **No longer will there be two universes, one for humans and one for God. Both will be together (See also 2 Cor. 6:16; Rev. 21:3)³**

2. John 3:3 NIV

Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."

- **The future physical kingdom of God will be inhabited by believers only.**
- **That should compel us to share the gospel while there is still time!**
- **This contradicts the view of universal salvation**

3. Psalm 16:11 NIV

"You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."

- **Heaven will not be boring. It will be filled with eternal pleasures, constantly discovering new things (Alcorn)**

4. Revelation 21:25 NIV

"On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there."

- **Q: Do you think this means we will never sleep in heaven?**
- **Ans: Sleep is one of life's greatest pleasures, not restless, troubled sleep, but refreshing sleep.**
- **Ans: It is quite possible we will enjoy a wonderful, enjoyable sleep from time to time as part of God's design for the rhythm of life. (Alcorn, Heaven 318, 264).**

5. Philippians 3:20-21 and Luke 24:39 NIV

"But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body."

"Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."

- **We will have physical bodies just like Jesus' physical body after he was resurrected ("glorified" body)**

6. John 14:1-2 NIV

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?"

-
-
-
- **Heaven is a physical place not just a figment of human imaginations.**
 - **We will have a place (τοπος); a designated area usually associated with land, in heaven.**

7. Luke 23:43 NIV

“Jesus answered him, ‘Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.’”

- **Believers go instantly into heaven (paradise). There is no “soul sleep” or reincarnations**

8. Revelation 21:27 NIV

“Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.”

- **There will be no sin in heaven.**
- **Anyone who has died has been freed from sin (Romans 6:7).**
- **Hebrews 9:26 says with an air of finality that Christ sacrificed himself to “put away sin” (NASB) or “to do away with sin” (NIV).**
- **1 Cor. 15:52 (NKJV) says We will be raised “incorruptible” or imperishable (NAU). The Greek word *aphthartos* means uncorrupted (immune to corruption)**
- **Christ will not allow us to be vulnerable to the very thing he died to deliver us from⁴**

9. 2 Peter 3:13 NIV and Revelation 21:1

“But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

“Then I saw ‘a new heaven and a new earth,’ for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.”

- **There will be a new heaven and a new earth.**
- **No longer will there be two universes, one for humans and one for God. Both will be together (2 Cor. 6:16; Rev. 21:3)⁵**
- **“No more sea” (turmoil of the nations (Isa. 17:12 NIV) “Woe to the many nations that rage-- they rage like the raging sea! Woe to the peoples who roar- - they roar like the roaring of great waters!**

10. Revelation 22:1-3 NIV

“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

- **A great river will flow from the throne of God and Jesus...we will always know where they are.**
- **It will be refreshing.**
- **Time will exist in heaven (“every month”)**
- **Why will nations require healing (Grk. *therapeia*) in heaven since there will be no death, or crying, or pain in heaven (Rev. 21:4).**
- **It could be the leaves will have properties that will help people maintain health and energy (Alcorn, Heaven 250).**
- **Another view is that John appears to be quoting from Ezekiel 47:12, where water from the temple produces trees with healing leaves.**
- **He is not implying that there will be illness in the new earth, he is emphasizing that the water of life produces health and strength wherever it goes (Life Application Bible 2333)**

11. Revelation 21:3

“No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.”

- **No more curse. The earth was cursed for Adam's sin (Gen. 3:17).**
- **Guilt, strife, struggle for survival, sickness, sorrow, and death resulted.**
- **In the new creation no such curses will remain.**

12. Revelation 21:15-16 NLT

“The angel who talked to me held in his hand a gold measuring stick to measure the city (New Jerusalem), its gates, and its wall. When he measured it, he found it was a square, as wide as it was long. In fact, its length and width and height were each 1,400 miles.”

- **The New Jerusalem (“city”) will be shaped like a perfect cube.**

- ~1400 miles wide, long, high.
- Q: Why will this city be a perfect cube?
- Ans: READ 1 Kings 6:20 (30 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 30 feet high - possibly to remind us of the Holy of Holies).
- Possibly also to remind us of the Trinity.
- The place where God met man in the Tabernacle and provided forgiveness of his sins.

APPLICATION

These facts are revealed to “unfasten” you from this present life of sin and struggle...and fix your focus on [your eternal home in heaven with God.](#)

For an expanded version of this outline please go to:

www.TaylorNotes.Info

Prime Time Bible Study Notes

Sources used in this study

Alcorn, Randy. *Heaven*. Carol Stream, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 2004.

—. *Heaven*. Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 2004.

Geisler, Norman. *Systematic Theology, Volume Four*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2005.

Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan; Intersity Press, 1994, 2000.

Life Application Bible. *Life Application Bible: New International Version*. Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers and Zondervan Publishing House, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991.

MacArthur, John. *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: 1 & 2 Thessalonians*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2002.

Taylor, Michael D. *Bible Study Outlines*. 2022. <<https://www.taylornotes.info/bible-studies>>.

End Notes

¹ (MacArthur 140-141)

² (Alcorn, Heaven 183)

³ (Alcorn, Heaven 177-178)

⁴ (Alcorn, Heaven 300)

⁵ (Alcorn, Heaven 177-178)